

## **Meeting Minutes**

Date: 4/1/2026

Meeting Start: 6:45 PM

Attendance:

- Executive Director: Candice Blackstone-Larson
- Board Members: Luke Guindon, Ann Fisher, Sue Bertram, Steven Sams, Phil Britton, Andie Johnston, Mary Tilson, Lee Ossenheimer
- Board Members Who Joined Remotely: Dick Pierson, Susan Divine
- Board Members Absent: Tom Dummer

### **Approval of Previous Minutes**

- **Ann Fisher moves to adopt the meeting minutes.**
  - **Seconded by: Steven Sams**
  - **The motion carried.**

### **Treasurer's Financial Report**

- Bell Financial Investment
  - \$110,652.97
- Business Checking
  - \$63,147.12
- Grant Business Checking
  - \$8.09
- Business Money Market
  - \$106,290.49
- 12-month CD for \$100,000 at Incredible Bank
  - \$103,803.06
- Account Totals
  - \$383,901.73
- **Treasurer's Financial Report Approval**
  - **Ann Fisher moves to approve the Treasurer's Report, subject to audit.**
  - **Seconded by: Sue Bertram**
  - **The motion carried.**

### **Consent Agenda**

- **CONSENT AGENDA: Electronic Vote: Music Selection Committee - Board Of Directors Communication Protocol & Rubric Decision Making Process (9-yes votes, 0-no votes, 2- no opinion votes)**

### **Committee Reports**

- Events Committee Report from Sue Bertram
  - Winter Roots
    - The recently held Winter Roots events had good attendance
    - Protest Music Workshop
      - \$130, plus 2 x \$50 memberships sold.

- 22 guests, 4 helpers, and 3 kids in attendance.
  - Irish music and square dancing
    - \$360, plus 1 x \$50 and 1 x \$250 memberships sold.
    - 48 guests, 12 kids in attendance.
  - April 15th is the next HOTAPP children's concert at 5 PM
    - There will be a resource table set up by UPHP and Cori Noordyk, and an arts & crafts table.
    - There was an anonymous \$200 donation to pay for pizza for the event.
    - Drum circle with Carrie Biolo, Biscuits & Gravy, and Corinne Rockow will be the performing artists.
- Blackrocks Brewery beer release event has been confirmed for July 2nd
  - We are waiting on confirmation from bands.
- Pre-fest on July 9.
  - Sue Bertram has reached out to several bands.
- Hiawatha House Band Square Dance
  - Upcoming event on April 9.
- Master Artist workshops and events will be held in the fall.
- Annual Meeting
  - Will take place on the first Saturday in November.
- Folklife Art fest
  - The festival will take place at NMU, during Oct 1-4.
  - 3 days of music, art, dance, storytelling and workshops.
  - Most of the events for this festival will be held at NMU.
- Membership Committee from Sue Bertram
  - Discussed how to best meet the needs of memberships purchased at the festival.
    - The co-op can emphasize that the purpose of buying a membership is to support the organization, and gain access to the annual meeting.
- Fundraising Report from Ann Fisher
  - The Fundraising committee did not meet.

### **Ad Hoc Committees**

- Investment planning
  - The committee met on March 16.
  - Susan Divine reports that the committee spoke with Jeff Baker, the Wheatland Board President.
    - Jeff was able to give some recommendations and suggestions as well as making the connection with the Wheatland long term

financial planner Claudia Rey-Perry, who is also a Wheatland Board Member.

- Jeff suggested that it could be a benefit to have a Board Member, or close Board relationship with someone who is well versed in financial planning to help with advising.
- Banking institutions with savings/CDs
  - Examine accounts to not exceed \$250,000 with a single financial institution because it is only insured up to \$250,000.
- 2020 and 2021 budget reports to examine the finances around the cancelled festival and virtual festival with the intention of understanding the full scope of a cancelled festival emergency.
- The committee discussed the need to pair the investment strategy with strategic planning for the future, which might be able to support things like scholarships, larger quarterly concerts or possible land purchase.
- Susan Divine has been in contact with Mary Meyers at Lake Superior Community Partnership. She is the contact person for an economic impact survey for a \$1,200 fee. If pursued, Mary would like to be a participant in developing the festival survey to gather the information needed to complete an economic survey. Susan suggested that we develop a team to focus on creating a survey for the festival.
  - Mary Tilson and Ann Fisher have volunteered to work on a survey.
- Board Eligibility Requirements Review Committee
  - The committee is discussing making eligibility changes for 9 hours of festival volunteering instead of 3 hours.
  - Specifying a 50-mile radius to serve as a local Board member.
  - Suggest that language is clearly updated to include serving on committee or ad hoc committee as a qualification requirement of Board member duties.
  - Requiring 4 hours of volunteering or committee work per month for Board members.
  - There is a discussion about adding a requirement to have volunteered at an event outside of the festival or on a committee, to qualify for Board member eligibility.
    - Several Board members oppose this change as being too narrow of a window of requirement.
  - The committee will re-work the changes with the intention of requiring 9 hours of volunteer time in the year required to meet the eligibility

requirements with a planned E-vote. Festival volunteering, Hiawatha events, or committee work would all qualify as this requirement.

- There is a discussion about different ways we might be able to encourage and raise awareness of volunteer opportunities with the intention of making it easier for good candidates to have met the Board eligibility requirements.
  - Suggestions include a standing list of volunteers that could be called on, a place on the website where people can sign up, festival survey, member sign up sheet, and maybe more specific questions about volunteer skillsets.
- BOD & MSC Communication Plan
  - Susan Divine, Sue Bertram, Tom Dummer, and Luke Guindon agreed to attend the April 12 Music Selection Committee meeting to discuss the music selection grid and policy concerns. There will also be a discussion about how to make a Cornbread & Tortillas event and artist selection happen, even with the higher costs required.

### **Old Business**

- All members are on committees as the requirement dictates.
- Annual Board Retreat Date
  - The Board needs to choose a weekend to host the annual retreat around and near the Annual Meeting.
  - At the March BOD meeting, there is a discussion to host the retreat in the fall around the dates of the annual membership meeting. Now, the conversation is leaning toward spring again because of the incoming/outgoing Board members, and the large amount of work and energy required to put on the event.
  - An annual date needs to be set, there is a preference toward March.
  - Phil Britton, Mary Tilson, and Sue Bertram would like to be involved in strategic planning in the fall of 2026. This might take place soon after the annual membership meeting.
- Office refrigerator needs
  - Sue Bertram has found a donated used refrigerator that the office can have to replace the office refrigerator.

### **New Business**

- Creation of new Facilities Maintenance Committee
  - Lee Ossenheimer is going to head up this newly formed committee.
  - This committee will maintain, and recommend the appropriate replacement of the festival infrastructure.
  - The committee will help with office facilities maintenance. This can include things like planting flowers each year and helping beautify at the office facility.

- This could be advantageous and create a deeper understanding when negotiating rent on the current office space.
- Sue Bertram recently used petty cash to purchase a few plants for indoors at the office.
- Candice Blackstone-Larson is reporting that the office roof is currently leaking in a couple of areas from roof damage that occurred during snow removal. Our landlord is aware and working toward a solution and will replace ceiling tiles after the repairs have been completed.
  - Candice Blackstone-Larson met with Doug Kitchell to discuss potential cabinetry and merchandise display area construction quotes.
    - We will come back with a more specific plan design, and check back with Doug afterwards for an estimate.

## Festival

- Sound Update & Proposal
  - Candice has assembled a 1-year, and a 3-year contract proposal that could both be presented to Sombrero Sound; it still needs finalization.
    - The Main Stage Sound line item would include yearly increases.
    - Susan Divine suggests searching for additional sound engineers that can be contacted in the future or in case of an emergency.
    - **Phil Britton moves to propose that the 1-year and 3-year proposals be submitted for an electronic vote.**
      - **Seconded by: Lee Ossenheimer**
      - **The motion carried.**
- Music Selection Committee report from Dick Pierson
  - All but one of the 2026 performers have been signed.
  - Dick is putting together a Spotify playlist for the first round of 2027 performers that the committee has currently selected.
  - After a discussion, Candice Blackstone-Larson agreed to start the promotion of the signed artists and bands for the 2026 festival via our online platform.
- Tourist Park update from Lee Ossenheimer.
  - Handicap parking may possibly be located in the small newly constructed parking lot on the north side of the park.
  - Tourist Park currently has a lot of trees that have fallen over the winter that need cleanup and will change the landscape.
  - Construction should be complete by Memorial Day.
  - Some tent locations may have to be modified due to new asphalt and the inability to stake them to the ground.
- Food Vendor Application Fee
  - Food vendor application is currently available online with a change to the surety deposit. This was updated from \$100 to \$250.
- AITR Application
  - Will be available online for 2026 festival vendors within a week.
- Raffle A/C
  - Raffle Area Coordinator has resigned from their Coordinator position.

- **Lee Ossenheimer moves to enter closed session at 7:59 PM to discuss issues related to 2025 Festival and coordinator resignation.**
  - **Seconded by: Sue Bertram**
  - **The motion carried.**
- **Phil Britton moves to return from closed session at 8:27 PM**
  - **Seconded by: Ann Fisher**
  - **The motion carried.**
- **First Aid Supplies**
  - Michael Trachtman contacted Lee Ossenheimer, inquiring about supplies currently being stored in a trailer from the last festival's medical tent. The trailer is currently inaccessible due to snow, but Lee will work with Michael and Candice Blackstone-Larson to identify and retrieve any items needed.
- **NMU parking for the 2026 festival has been secured.**
- **Blackrocks Brewery contract**
  - Candice Blackstone-Larson and Sue Bertram have been in contact with Blackrocks Brewery to renegotiate our contract.
- **Grants update with Candice Blackstone-Larson**
  - **Superior Health Foundation Equipment grant**
    - AED has been delivered.
    - We are still waiting on awarded funds.
  - **Marquette Arts & Culture Center grant**
    - We had to upload a budget this year.
    - Currently working on governor & representative thank you letters (a requirement of receiving the grant funds)
  - **Submitted Marquette city promotional fund**
    - Requested \$2,000.
    - In the past we have been awarded \$500.
  - **Travel Marquette**
    - Requested \$2500

#### **Meeting Adjournment**

- **Ann Fisher moves to adjourn the meeting.**
  - **Seconded by: Phil Britton**
  - **The motion carried.**

**Meeting Ended: 8:32 PM.**

**Next Regular Board Meeting - May 6, 2026, 6:30 PM.**